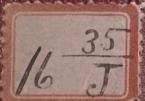
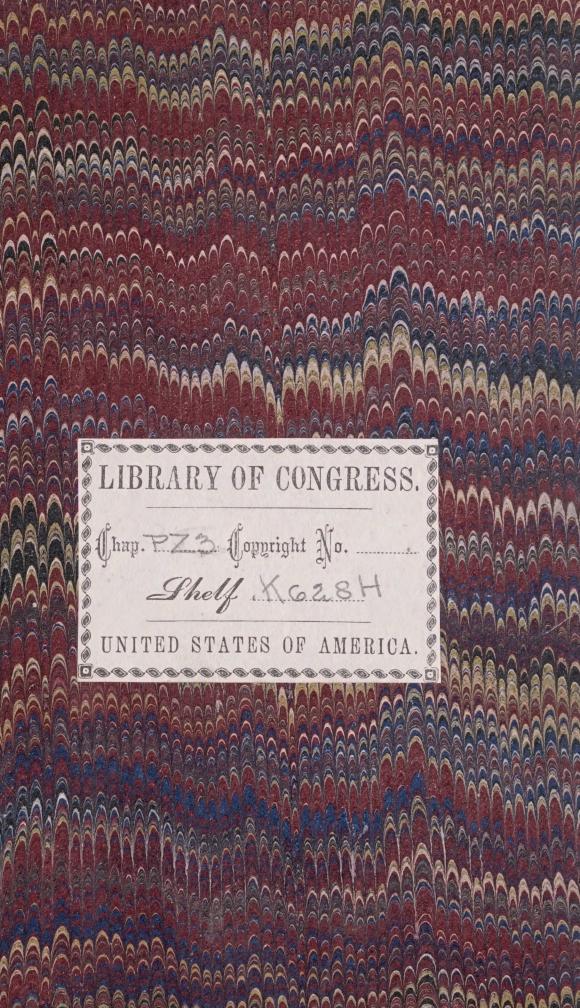
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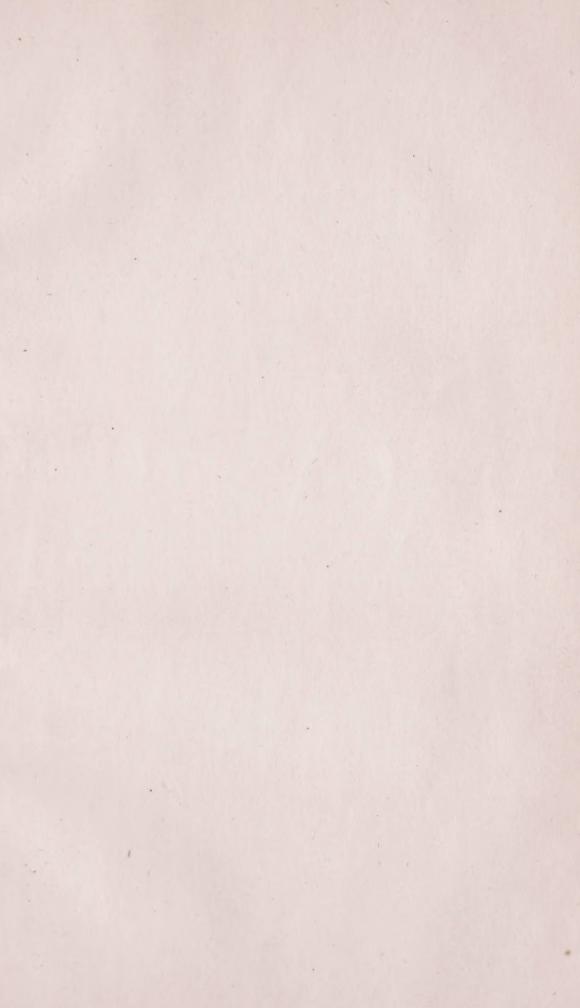
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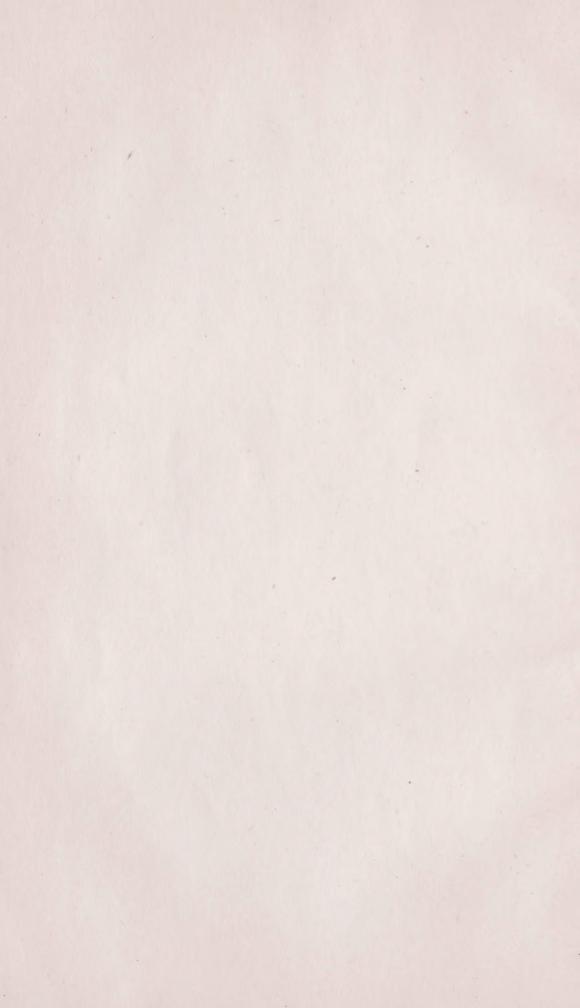














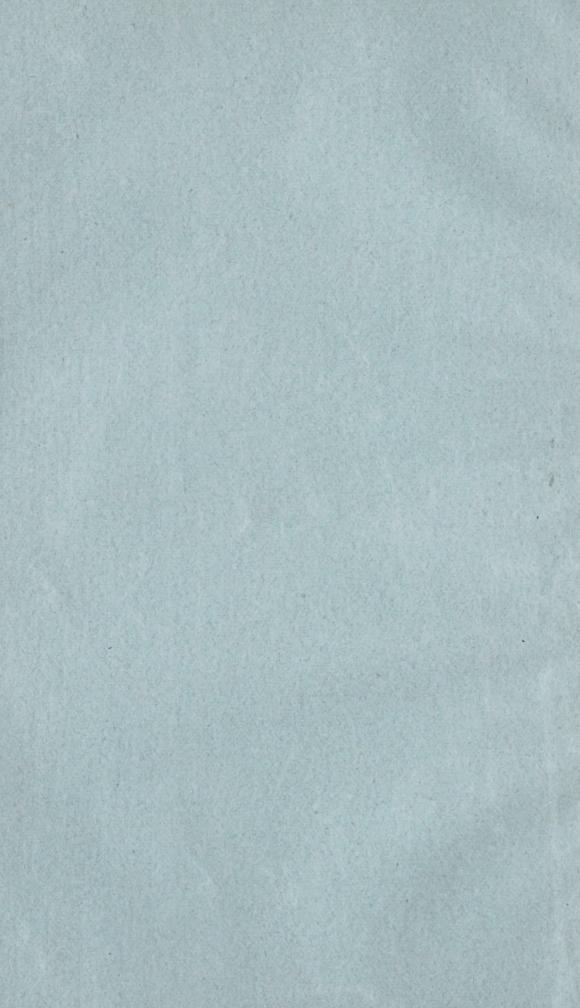


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Mannibal's Ham.

By Leonard Kip.

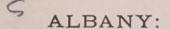


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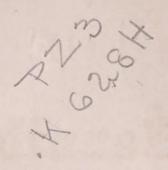


HANNIBAL'S MAN.

BY LEONARD KIP.



THE ARGUS COMPANY, PRINTERS. 1873.



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OW that the earliest buds and blossoms of Spring are peeping stealthily above the more protected borders of the glacier, or from certain sheltered nooks of the surrounding snow-crowned slopes, it is one of my chiefest pleasures to wander forth and gather them as precious trophies, for the adornment of our mountain-cabin. This I do, not loving flowers for themselves. In my own land, the sweetest rose-buds, in the most romantic woodland nooks, would be passed by me unnoticed. But here, in the Alpine fastnesses, where for so many months the land lays fettered with snow and ice, and even chance passengers do not often journey by, those flowers are to me a type of coming Spring, - a joy, in that they speak of partial release from hyperborean bondage,—a memento of the softer climate of my own far-off country; and as such I value them, apart from any sentiment connected with their own mere intrinsic beauty.

Why then, since all the while my heart thus remains fixed upon the congenial memories of my native home, do I linger in this land of wintry captivity and cheerlessness? It is very easy to explain, indeed, why at the first I took refuge in such

a lonely region. Disappointment in certain cherished hopes,-chagrin about baffled ambitions,-the inevitable sadness engendered through failure in a friendship where most securely I had learned to trust,—these several influences combined to create in me a temporary dislike of all the world, its society, restraints, and interests, and thereby drove me away to these Alpine wilds, where, more completely than elsewhere, I thought that I might avoid encounter with mankind. And yet, now that at last the morbid influence has left me, and once more I learn to pine after the pleasures and pursuits of the outer world, why do I linger longer in this enforced seclusion and only from the mountain heights gaze longingly into the sunny valleys through which so easily I might journey to my home? Surely I do not love the mountains. Their unchanging outlines weary me,—their passing lights and shades afford me no variety,—their wintry blasts enfeeble me,—their rude, uncouth inhabitants repel me. In the whole range of snow-crowned peaks I can gather no kindling of romance to inspire me with the least enthusiasm;—for me the dearest place on earth must ever be my little dingy home in the narrowest of all streets in Heidelberg. Yet here, in this tempestuous spot, I have remained the Winter through; and at last it has been impressed upon me with the certainty of fate, that I shall never leave the Alps again.

There is one prevailing reason for it all. Before I had remained many weeks in this uncongenial district, and while the freshness of the life of perfect isolation was still most powerful with me, I had

chanced to see and at once had loved Ursula. She was a simple Alpine maiden of sixteen, -herself an orphan, -- brought up in kindly, loving charity within the neighboring convent, and thereby naturally remaining almost a stranger to the outer world, -knowing, indeed, no other home than that of the circumscribing convent walls. I loved her, at the first meeting with her, for the soul-lit beauty of her face and the unapproachable graces of her lithe figure; and she, childlike and trusting, loved me in return, inasmuch as she had learned to look upon me as marked with something different from the gross boorishness around her. Therefore, while yet the world remained distasteful to me, I had yielded to the impulse of my sudden love for her, and led her away, as my precious bride, to that little cabin set apart upon the mountain-side.

There we have lived in happy freedom from all outward intrusion; but now that there has come again to me a yearning for the past and its familiar scenes, it is mingled with a strange dread of making the attempt to realize them. For how may I dare to hope that Ursula can ever adapt herself to that other and more artificial life, of which, as yet, she has never even read? And how,—more especially, I ponder,—can I venture, with due regard for my own peace of mind, to lead her into that outer world, where she would see other men, between whom and myself, so easily she could make comparison unfavorable to me? For, in my heart there is an exceeding jealous nature, which I never can subdue. I know that she has chosen me because I am different in her

eyes from any of the rough, uncouth people around her. And yet I am not of stalwart form or of prepossessing mien. Much delving over hidden roots of dead languages has taken from me all possible graces of the body. I know that, in a different land, she could not fail to see many men whom, for their appearance, she would naturally prefer to me. While I reside upon the Alpine slope, apart from others of our race, I can remain to her ignorant, untutored eyes a god; but among different men, how can I answer for it that her simple, childlike nature, thinking no harm, but merely influenced by her instinctive love for the grand and beautiful, might not become warped from its true regard for me? Better a life-long seclusion, indeed, than that this should happen. And so, while thinking upon my own country, with a longing that knows no rest, month after month, I find myself lingering among the sterile mountains. And telling Ursula that the world outside is very cruel, and, if possible, more forbidding even than among the avalanches, I press her close to my heart and glory in the pleasant deception which I feel would retain me ever constant in her sweet affection.



"And now, thinking only of our mutual love and letting the outer world pass by, unheeded, we will wander forth once more," I said to her this morning, "and search for early flowers. Last week, indeed, we looked in vain; but since then the sun has shone

out warmly, and already I see signs that the buds are sprouting below, against the glacier banks."

"Why should we go to-day?" she hesitatingly rejoined. "For listen how the convent-chapel bells are even now warning me."

"I hear the bells, far down the Pass, tolling a requiem," I said. "It is the requiem of the chamois hunter who was killed two days ago. But how can that affect yourself?"

"I know not, except that these things always seem to influence my lot, however they may seem to apply to others," she responded, a shiver of apprehension passing over her frame. "Do you not know that I am the convent's child, and under its protection? And so whenever I am about to encounter peril, a kindly warning is sounded out to me from the bells. While, if it is a coming joy, so do the bells announce that, as well. Doubtless the bells are now ringing for the slain chamois hunter; but if it was not also meant as a warning to myself, I should not now be able to hear them. The wind would carry the sound the other way, or it would be deadened to my ears. But listen now to the dirge, how close it sounds, even as though the bells were just outside!"

"It is a foolish fancy, Ursula," I said; "and one that would not now come to you, but for long confinement in the house. The purer air abroad will dissipate such vagaries. Come,—let us depart; for I know that since we were last at the Glacier, fresh flowers have been born to greet and cheer us."

It was as I had supposed. Ere long, in a little recess where the rocks receded from the icy abra-

sion, I found a tuft or two of grass amid thin layers of fast dissolving snow-wreaths; and in the center of all, a clump of pale lilly-shaped crocuses. I severed them carefully from the ground and first twined three or four in Ursula's thick tresses. Then holding the others in my hand for the decoration of our cabin, I turned with her upon the homeward path. Yet before departing, feeling moved by some indefinable curiosity, I approached the edge of the great Glacier and gazed down upon it.

The vast icy sea here and there was cracked and broken—roughened in wide portions as though, at one time, watery waves had been raised upon it by the wind, and frozen by instantaneous blast; and throughout its greatest extent, was covered with sheets of snow, laying many feet deep upon it. In certain spots, however, the snow had either blown or melted away, and in other places the surface of the ice had liquified and again been frozen with glassy smoothness. This happened to have been the case just where now I stood; and I could look down many inches into the clear, unruffled depths of the ice, almost with the same ease and distinctness with which one can gaze into a quiet pool belonging to a running spring.

"See, Ursula!" I said, after a moment, and pointing downward. "A log."

It lay, apparently, two feet below the surface of the ice, indistinct and shadowy in form, but evidently a log. What else, indeed, could it be?

"Yes,—a log," remarked Ursula. "Can it have been there very long do you think?"

"Who knows? For centuries, perhaps," I said. And then, a little proud, it may be, of my power to instruct, I told her all I knew about the theory of the glacial formations. How that this same river of ice had been forming from above for many generations and working downward upon its rocky bed, at the rate of a few inches every year, until at last it would decompose and melt away into the valley below. How that it had the faculty of grasping and concealing within its icy embrace, more securely than within miser's chest, whatever might cross its path: but how that after long periods, it might even be after many centuries, it was always forced to release its prey, which, from the melting of the surface of the ice and possibly from some inherent power of self-extrication, would gradually work up into the outer air and become forever free. How that this same log, imprisoned for so long, was now doubtless upon the point of attaining its release, and in a few months would float away on mountain stream, down to the sea itself.

"And we will watch it in its efforts after freedom, my love," I said, as we returned to our home. "It will be a pleasant pastime for us during the passage of the Summer."

A very little thing, indeed, for me to interest myself about, after my enlarged communications of the past with the outer world. And why, in fact, do I not only ponder long upon it after our return, but even write down the whole circumstance in exact detail? Hardly do I know,—or even whether it is one or several causes that impel me. It may be

that I give heed to such a trifle simply because there. is no other way to occupy my time. It may be that through want of proper exercise for it, my mind is already losing its proper tone and attuning itself to trivial things. And it may be, after all, that I am influenced by the desire to make true record of Ursula's superstitious fancies at the moment when her very words are still fresh in my memory; so that hereafter reading them, and acknowledging that no misfortune has come to her, she will learn to dispossess herself forever of such vagaries. It is not pleasant to see her sitting beside the fire, her head buried reflectively between her hands, and her whole attitude that of one moodily brooding over a mystery. Rather should she learn to laugh merrily at the whole conception of a warning from the convent bells.



A week has slowly passed away; and this morning we have repaired once more to the Glacier. When there before, I carefully marked the position of the log; and from my close measurements, I now find that the whole body of ice has moved one inch along the bank. This, of itself, would make little change. But meanwhile the sun has been hot, and the sloping of the surface of the ice from the center of the Glacier has allowed the melted portions to run off, and I can now see clearly that the log has been brought much nearer to the surface than before, so that I can inspect it with increasing distinctness of observation. And I now find that, though a log,

it bears something of the shape of a man; a branch, or that which might be a branch, being projected from the side like to an extended arm.

"And of course it must gather in interest for us, Ursula," I remarked, as I pointed out to her this fact. "For now we can plainly see that the log has some attempt at rude carving. In truth, I have little doubt that it is an old-world representative of a heathen god,— most probably a statue of Odin himself. Once honored as an idol, this log must have been accidentally thrown into some abyss, to become, after many centuries, a study for our profane gaze."

To Ursula, the theory seems to bring little interest. How could it be expected, when in all probability she has never even heard of Odin? But with myself, it fills the mind with strange speculation. Can it be that, after all, this apparently profitless existence in the Alps is destined to make me famous as the discoverer of a rare relic of an ancient race?



Again an interval of a week, and once more we have visited the spot. And now I find that I must alter my previous conjecture. All this while I see that the supposed idol has been gradually approaching the surface still nearer; and now that I can examine it more closely, I can detect that it is no mere rude carving of a savage age. A charming bronze statue, rather, of the highest type of art, so natural is it in its proportions and attitude. A

representation of a warrior in helmet, breastplate and sandals, with shield upon his arm and short sword at his side. One leg is thrown a little in advance of the other, and the shield is raised so as partially to cover the head; yet, not sufficiently to conceal a portion of the rear adornment of the helmet crest. Looking upon all this, for many minutes, I gazed in almost speechless admiration.

"A wonderful discovery!" I broke forth at last. "And who can tell how valuable? To the archæologist, a revelation,—to the artist, an inspiration from the past,—to us, looking upon the matter in its less romantic aspect, a possible fortune. Of the age of Augustus, it may be,—or earlier, even. And how came it here? For how many centuries may it not have been imbedded in this solid ice? Ursula, in another fortnight, at the most, we can obtain possession of our prize. Until then, let us subdue our impatience, and watch to see that no one may spirit it from us."

And, in order that no possible precaution may be neglected, I have sprinkled snow lightly over the spot, lest any other person passing,—an improbable circumstance, indeed,—may look down into the clear ice and claim my prize. Each day, during the coming fortnight, will I sally forth to watch for indications of intrusion. Yet all the while will I struggle to subdue my own impatience, and not look too prematurely upon the statue; preferring to wait until the elements may deliver it up to me, and then to enjoy, in sudden and complete fruition, the sense of its artistic loveliness.

Now let me strive to regulate my thoughts aright, to the end that I may set down everything in due sequence and in order, without confusion or exaggeration, and thereby, hereafter reading it with more collected brain, perhaps, may know that it was not a dream.

This morning the fortnight of probation that I had allotted to myself came to an end, and I could control myself no longer. Taking a shovel and pickax in either hand, and accompanied by Ursula, I proceeded to the spot where lay my treasure, gazed carefully around to see that even at that last moment there was no danger of intrusion, and then, hurriedly and with nervous hand, brushed away the light covering of snow.

The warm sun of the advancing Summer had well done its work. The statue was now within a few inches of the surface, and a portion of the upstretched shield had even begun to obtrude slightly into the outer air. The covering of ice was now soft and brittle. Even the pick was scarcely necessary for its removal. Carefully scraping around with the shovel, I succeeded in removing most of the incumbent weight of ice; and at length, to my inconceivable satisfaction, the whole statue lay exposed to view.

I lifted it a few inches from the ice, to assure myself that all was clear and disconnected beneath, and then gently let it fall into place again. I could not but notice that it was scarcely as heavy as it ought to be, for a work of solid bronze; and yet, for the moment, I suffered my mind to dwell only

slightly upon that circumstance. The rather did I ponder upon the position and attitude of the statue. It lay,—as I have already said,—with one leg advanced and the shield raised as though to cover the head. A striking pose, indeed; and yet there was something in it, that, from the first, instinctively confounded me. Then, after a moment, I saw that this arose from the attitude of the statue being such that, if placed upon its feet, it could not sustain itself without external support,—the center of gravity being too far forward and the feet themselves not adjusted upon the same level. Moreover, there were no appearances of outward fastenings, whereby it might possibly have been designed to rest against a column behind. Apart from these mysterious defects, it struck me as a marvelous work of art; the muscles of arm and leg being admirably defined, and the torso, wherever the termination of the armor allowed its display, being a wonder of correctly defined anatomy.

"What think you of it, yourself, Ursula?" I inquired, turning towards her. Her gaze was fastened, as mine had been, upon the statue; and I looked to see signs of admiration in her expression. But all at once I noticed that she turned pale, a startled gleam of terror shot across her face, she gave a broken scream and fell nearly fainting into my arms.

"Did you not see?" she gasped, partially recovering herself. "Look! The statue has moved! It moved while I was looking at it!"

I turned again, ready to smile at her fears, and

deeming her apparent impulse of imagination only a new test of the artistic excellence of the statue, thus enabling her to deceive her own eyes with the contemplation of its life-like truthfulness. But I myself almost gasped with terror when I saw that it had actually moved. The leg was thrown further forward, and the shield had dropped towards the knees, exhibiting what had been previously concealed,-a rugged and unexpectedly aged appearance of face, partially covered with curling gray beard. The face was bronzed, indeed, -yet of a different color from the rest of the body. And while I looked on with an indefinable apprehension of something, I could not for the moment even attempt to explain, the figure rolled its head slightly towards one side, the eyes opened with a tremulous movement, like that of a person exposed to sudden light,—and there came the convulsive quiver of a long-drawn breath!

"Merciful heavens!" I said, "it is really a living man!" And resting my wife in convenient position upon the bank, I hastened to the relief of the stranger. I took him in my grasp, placed my hand beneath his head, and so gradually raised him into a sitting posture. To this he submitted without resistance, appearing, for the moment, like one who had not sufficient perception to comprehend anything that might be done with him. But in a few minutes, his eyes becoming more accustomed to the strong sunlight, remained open with less strained aspect; a light of new intelligence—the birth of a living soul, as it were—began to glow in them,

changing their lack-lustre appearance into an animated sparkle of inner perception; he breathed tremulously once or twice again; then drew up one leg in more easy attitude between his extended hands, and gazed inquiringly at me.

"Who are you?" I demanded, with little hope, however, of being understood. And in this opinion I was correct, for he merely gazed upon me with puzzled expression, left his eyes to rove up and down my dress with something of a dawning smile, and answered me in certain uncouth sounds, which were as incomprehensible to me as mine had doubtless been to him. Meanwhile, Ursula, having somewhat recovered from her first fright, arose and approached us, her curiosity apparently overpowering any remains of fear.

"I see it all now, Ursula," I said to her, anxious not merely to give to the facts that sensible explanation which would remove from them all suspicion of the supernatural, but also not unwilling once more to exhibit my capacity to instruct. "I see it all. He is merely a man, like myself,—and not a statue."

"And he has come—"

"Who knows from where or how long ago? But that he is a living man, how can we doubt? You have never heard, perhaps, how that certain animals have been brought to life again, after long exclusion from the air. Or how that there are fishes that may be frozen, and, after months, thawed out alive. What is that secret power of retention of existence, which belongs to some brutes and seems forbidden to mankind? Or is there really any such power that we do

not have as well as the brutes,—being, as yet, merely ignorant of its proper application? Some persons have conjectured the latter, indeed; and have long wearied their brains in efforts to solve the enigma and apply to the human race those principles which preserve the brutes. Once or twice it has been believed that the secret was really discovered; but yet the result could not be tested, for want of some one sufficiently confident or enthusiastic to allow of the experiment being tried upon his own person."

"And you believe that here -"

"Here, Ursula," I continued, delighted to find that she had so readily grasped the idea, "here, it seems to me, that nature has at last taken the experiment into her own hands, and, by what we would call an accident, has fulfilled all the necessary conditions for the continued suspension of the existence of a human being. At some far distant time, this man must have been overwhelmed near the mountain-top in a sudden fall of avalanche,—the wreaths of snow gradually thereafter turning into ice and so begirting him as to retain his vitality in suspense, and thereby hinder corruption. He has formed a portion of the Glacier for many centuries, perhaps; -and now, at the melting of the ice, near the mountain base, he is at last released alive, for our edification and instruction. Truly, he may yet prove of more value than many mere statues of bronze or marble."

Meanwhile, the man, gaining confidence in his powers during those few moments, had slowly gathered his forces together and now raised himself into a standing position. Tottering weakly, at first,

indeed; but soon recovering more of his strength, so that, with all his ripeness of age, he was able to assume something of an erect and self-possessed posture, as of a soldier on guard. Little by little, and yet with such steady gradation that I could perceptibly watch its progress, full restoration to what must have been his former state came upon him. Some hitherto latent natural heat of the body evolved itself; and, in a moment, the moisture of his scanty dress-that unavoidable moisture with which his long detention in the ice must have imbued him - began to pass off in visible steam, and soon he stood dry and comfortable as though raised from flowery bank. The first pallor of his complexion, tinged with livid green, faded away, giving place to as ruddy a glow of health as old age can ever expect to exhibit, and evidently his blood commenced a new circulation after its long stagnation. Momentarily his eye grew brighter and more earnest in its intensity. I could not help marveling at the change. A few moments before, -and though recognizable as a human being,—he had lain at my feet, imbued with all the repulsive attributes of a corpse. Now he stood a well formed man, as athletic in appearance as might be consonant with wrinkles and gray hairs, - instinct with health and ambition, - animated with a certain pleasing dignity of manner which could not fail to impress me with a consciousness of what he might have been in the long past days of youth or even middle age.

"Come," I now merely said; and taking him by the arm, I led him away, while Ursula walked at

his other side, ready to give him her support, as well, if his so recently recovered strength should chance to give way. But that there was no danger of this, however, I could soon observe. He had recovered his forces not readily again to part with them. In silence he suffered himself to be conducted away, evidently mystified with the singularity of his situation, but not in the least realizing his true condition, nor where he had been brought to life, nor, at the moment, able to reconcile the present scenes with the cloudy forrent of past recollections sweeping through his bewildered brain. Most likely his latest memories must have been about matters that seemed not many hours old. How, then,-he must have speculated,—did he come hither and among persons so strangely clothed? I could see with what confused curiosity he glanced at the dress of Ursula and myself; a curiosity which was not at all diminished as he surveyed, on reaching home, the architecture of our cabin, as well as the furniture and implements within.

And there at last he sleeps,—lying across my hearth, in curled up posture like a dog. I look down upon his outstretched arm still grasping his shield, his other hand wildly tossing to and fro, in the agitation of his broken slumber,—I listen to his loud breathing,—and I watch the flickering firelight play upon his wrinkled face and tangled gray locks. And again and again I ask myself who he may be! Of what nation and of what distant age? And what must have been the dire extremity of that nation, that for its defence, even old age must thus

have been summoned to the camp and forced to bear the sword and buckler?



We have given food and shelter to the stranger, and now for many weeks he has been abiding with us. At first I supposed that he would have taken early opportunity to depart, as escaping from imagined captivity; but such was not the case. seemed, indeed, rather indisposed to suffer me to go out of his sight, as though deeming himself lost without me. Whether his long dormant system needed repose of another kind, or whether he has been uncertain whither he could betake himself if he fled, I do not know. But for many days at a time he has remained in a listless, indolent state, sitting in his armor at my cabin door,-with something of the same indifference for the future with which an Indian, surfeited with the fruits of the chase, will lie around his wigwam; and if I move away upon any exploration of the neighborhood, I find him tagging at my heels like a dog, apparently uneasy in mind until he sees me safely home again.

Little by little I have made my own discoveries about him. And almost from the very first, I have ascertained my error regarding his age. For after all he is not an old man, tottering in enforced military servitude, to assist the waning features of an imperiled state. Those earliest appearances of decrepitude were nothing more than the natural results of long confinement from the light and air;

and under the new conditions in which he is placed, they have passed away almost like a morning mist. At first, with the influence of food and warmth, the gray locks seemed to gain life, and rapidly changed to a dark, rich brown. Then the complexion softened into the soft hue of youth, and little by little each ugly wrinkle cleared away. After that the form grew more erect, gaining at least three or four inches in height. And so, step by step, the seemingly old man has grown young, and in less than a fortnight, has recovered all his natural beauty and elasticity, and stands disclosed to us a glorious creature, strong, athletic and alert, with the air and manner of a god, every limb moulded with more than artistic excellence, the face radiant with intelligence, the whole creature instinct with almost every quality of physical perfection that harmoniously can adorn manhood.

Noticing this change, I have made other discoveries concerning him. And commencing at the first with matters of mere habit and costume, I have noticed that the shield, which still as by force of custom he bears around with him, is not of iron, as I had at first supposed, but is of stiffened layers of bull's hide, bound together with metal rivets. There are strange characters embossed upon it, however, defying my interpretation; and the crest of his helmet together with the projections of his breast-plate, bear unknown figures by way of ornamentation. Once I have seen him prostrated in devotional attitude before the rising sun. Who, indeed, — I then again for the hundreth time said, — can be this

creature, strangely raised into life from his icy tomb? In regard to this, however, I have not been long in gaining some knowledge. I cannot, as yet, it is true, decipher the inscriptions upon shield or helmet, and for a time his language seemed merely a series of uncouth articulations; nor could I detect the slightest recognizable sound in the utterances, which, at certain moments, he instinctively poured forth. But I have been, in past years, a diligent student in languages, giving myself up to the philosophy of philology and fond of tracing up modern sounds into their Sanscrit and Shemitic roots; and thus it chanced that a few days ago I fancied that in a random utterance of this strange creature, I detected a familiar articulation. Upon this, I grew more intent, and with similar utterances of my own, encouraged him to speak. Little by little I managed to connect his articulation with ancient roots, the one running into the other and then back again so as to form an almost incomprehensible maze, yet fraught with certain suggestions of method. And this very morning it has happened that a single expression of his has let into my mind a flood of light. All the loose ends of uncertainty have now gathered themselves into place, making a woven web of consistency. And, with a thrill of joy I have discovered that, by using simple expressions, I am able to converse with him in his own language.

"Who are you?" of course, was my first inquiry
"I am one of Hannibal's men," he answered. "We
are on our way across these mountains to attack the
Romans."

"And how came you here?" I continued.

"That is what I scarcely know," he responded. "We left Carthage a few months ago, and went to Hispania. And when, by force of arms, we had occupied that country, we set out across the mountains to attack Rome. On the route I must have fallen into the snow, and been detained. But where, now, is the army? And where is Hannibal?"

"The army is gone,—all dead and gone,—and Hannibal as well," I answered. "You think that your mischance happened a few days past, do you not? Know, on the contrary, that it is more than twenty centuries ago."

"And what, then, is a century?"

"That is to say, over twenty hundred years ago," I explained.

"Do you think me a fool, to tell me such a story as that?" he exclaimed, with indignation. And for the moment, he would listen to no word further from me, but resolutely and speechlessly turned his back. And I could see that, with the revival of new thoughts, his glance passed inquiringly and longingly across the crest of that Alpine range, as though he might yet, in some far off point, behold a section of the long vanished cohorts winding its way across some open space.

Meanwhile, I have one duty to perform, and that is, to call the attention of the scientific world to the examination of my prize. I have the gift of language sufficiently to converse with him, but I have not the archæological ability to make our conversation properly available. There are those alive

who know how to examine him, through me, for the determination of important questions of antiquity; and I feel that I must lose no time in giving them the opportunity.

Will it be believed? So incredulous and impracticable is the world, that all my efforts have been of no avail. I had thought to confer upon the world of science, art and history an inestimable benefit, in making it acquainted with my strange guest. But though I have written to scientific and antiquarian devotees in every direction, my letters have elicited no response. Each person has seemed to believe, either that I am practicing upon his credulity or that I am bereft of my senses. Indeed, in a German newspaper that yesterday fell in my way, I read a republication of one of my letters, with sarcastic comments upon my sanity. There has not been one answer to all my appeals; and instead of the crowds of archæological inquirers whom I had expected to see pressing forward to my home, there yet remains the almost unbroken solitude,-still, only the Carthagenian soldier, Ursula and myself.

Therefore, I have concluded to give up my efforts, and leave the whole scientific world to that forget-fulness which it so richly deserves. Meanwhile, of all the three, Ursula, at least, has not been idle. Her womanly sympathy has been aroused, and she has desired to have the heathen soldier instructed in the mysteries of the Christian faith. In vain I have proposed to instruct him rather and at the first, in those usages and appliances of modern times, which for his own comfort, it is most befitting that he should

know. To every such demand upon my part she has had some ready answer with which, for the moment, to overcome me. Therefore have I yielded to her, and day after day have sat before the two, interpreting her instructions to him.

And all this has turned out as I anticipated. To her arguments upon the mysteries of our religion, he has exhibited utter inability of comprehension, while his attention has sorely wandered. To her narration of gospel history, he has manifested incredulity rather than want of interest. In no respect has he exhibited any serious regard to her words, indeed, except where she has spoke about the feast and ceremonies belonging to the church. Possibly he has found something in them akin to the usages of his own religion, thus awakening his memories of home. Doubtless, also, youth and vigor, accustomed to a life of gayety and pleasure, could not well fail to find some excitation of spirit in the recapitulations of observances relating to occasional admitted abandonments of discipline. Carthage, doubtless, had its feast days; and it is easy for him to confound with these, the more serious and well tempered festivities of the modern church.

And amidst all this, there has come to me a new reflection, instinct with terrible anxiety. To-day I have happened to note, more narrowly than I have ever done before, what a very handsome young soldier this man of Hannibal chances to be,—how well-formed are his features and how gracefully poised, his head,—how finely shaped are his limbs, and how becomingly his armor sets them off,—how

he stands in height a head and shoulders over me. And gazing stealthily towards my wife, I note how, from time to time, she turns her head in his direction; drawn thitherward in unconscious, unsuspecting admiration of that wonderful physical beauty. I know that her heart is faithful to me; and yet I begin to think that the time might easily come, in the which her admiration could unwittingly change to love and I lose all. I have lived for months in this desert solitude, so repugnant to me, only that I may let her see no other man than myself, and thereby be released from any chance of suffering through ungenerous comparison. Must all my precautions now be set at naught by the presence of this warlike young heathen Adonis? Truly I must get rid of him as soon as possible.



It is accomplished; and to my mingled gratification and surprise, more easily than I had anticipated.

"Why do you linger here?" I said to him this morning. "Have you no wish to go back to the land of your birth,—to your own native Carthage? Though you may not see it in all respects as you left it, will it not be something to see it at all and in any condition whatsoever?"

"You say well," he answered, starting up, as with the impulse of an entire new thought. "I will go thither at once. Only put me in the way of it."

Thereupon I have marked out his route for him and told to what ports he must hie, and how thence

he could cross over to the opposite shore of Africa. And fearing, lest through the singularity of his costume, he may be detained ere he is well on his way, I have persuaded him to lay aside his armor, and clothe himself in the fashion of the day. To this effect, I have put him into a cast off suit of my own, judiciously altered by Ursula; and so have bidden him good-by and set him off upon his journey. And now, at last, surely I am ridden of him. For I can never even dream that he will be able to thread the mazes of unknown lands expertly enough to find his way back again; even if, as is very unlikely, he escapes being knocked upon the head, by reason of some unwitting trespass upon the rights of others.



Trouble upon trouble! He has been gone only two months; and this day, upon returning from a stroll, to my amazement I beheld him sitting contemplative at my cabin door. In disgust of modern usage, he had resumed his antique dress and armor, and now looked more gloriously beautiful than ever.

"Ha! Can it be?" I exclaimed, and in no hospitable tone.

"Listen," he said. "I went to Carthage, or what once was such. I crossed to Africa in some sort of a ship, worked by a power to which three banks of galley slaves with oars would be as nothing. I stood at last, not within Carthage, but only where it had been. There were merely a few sewer arches and

a broken column or two. Why did you not tell me in advance that this was to be all? Where are my family, my altars, and my gods? Where is the army, and where is great Hannibal himself? I begin to believe that I may, indeed, have slept beneath the snow-drifts a little longer than I had supposed. Only a stone or two of the magnificent city now left! and they tell me that the Roman dogs whom we so often slew in heaps, have made all that ruin!"

"True, it is the Roman dogs that have done it," I responded, eagerly following out the new train of thought. "Why, then, do you not take your revenge in seeing how mercilessly they have been punished in return? Go now, therefore, to Rome itself, and observe how terribly the barbarians have overrun and devastated it."

"Yes, I will do that," he exclaimed, his eyes kindling at the revengeful suggestion. "That sight will give comfort to my heart! I will go at once and feast upon Rome's misery! There shall not be an hour's delay!"

Therefore, once more he has stripped himself of his armor and assumed the less noticeable costume with which I had furnished him. Once more I have bidden him God speed, with the secret hope that he may be so speeded as never to return.

"And yet," I mutter to myself with secret feeling of foreboding, "if such is to be the sequel, why is it that the bells of the convent chapel are tolling a saddened chime, as though there were misfortune still lurking in the air? If my persecutor is really

never destined to return, would not the bells leap up and down in very cadence?"

Saying all this, it is not exactly with belief in Ursula's superstition about the bells. But still, as she there sits, oppressed with the melancholy chiming, her hands pressed over her eyes, in spite of my better judgment, I cannot help somewhat sympathizing in her mood, and thinking that after all, perhaps, there may be some method in the madness. Did not the bells ring out a requiem upon that unlucky day when first I discovered this terrible disturber of my peace lying in semblance of a senseless log? Throughout the coming months have the bells ever sounded one pleasant note for us, and all the while has not ill-fortune constantly gathered nearer? Is this to last forever, and will the bells never again pour forth one merry peal to cheer us?



Now to God be all —. Yet let me not too prematurely hurry to the end; lest in my haste, forgetting anything now, my recollection may hereafter go astray.

Last night was Christmas eve. We had prepared our cabin for the festive occasion after the manner of my German home. I had brought greens from the nearest forest, and Ursula and myself had twined them into wreaths, with which we hung our walls, while in the center of the room, after the manner of a chandelier, swung a great clump of larch. As the evening drew on, Ursula had re-

tired to rest, promising herself that she would arise at earliest dawn and greet the sunrise of Christmas day at the convent-chapel altar. Thereby I was left for the while alone; and sat before the great fire of blazing, crackling logs, nodding over a favorite classic, and wishing that I, too, had the resolution to retire.

All at once I heard a heavy footstep crunching upon the trodden snow outside,—then it ceased and there came a sudden fumbling with the latch. A moment more, and the door flew open and I saw the Carthagenian standing outside. Without a word he strode within, and seizing a chair brought it down with a violent crash at the other side of the fireplace, and sullenly seated himself.

"Again returned!" I cried, still more discourteously than I had spoken at his previous reappearance. "What ill wind—"

"It is that you have deceived me," he retorted.

"Did you not assure me that I would have my revenge in seeing Rome in ruins?"

"And is it not so?"

"Here a ruin and there a ruin;—but what is that compared with the utter devastation of my own city? Do I not, in spite of it, find a city to which the whole world presses forward with abject reverence? Do I not find families there existing, which, with more or less certainty, profess to be the descendants of the very race that made desolation of my own? Do I not there see, almost uninjured, the tomb of the very man who led his hosts against us? Are not the annals still remaining, which show the

full story of our misfortune and disgrace? Am I to be satisfied, therefore, with the crumbling of a circus or the rending apart of a temple or two? What revenge is there in all that, indeed? Yes, you have deceived me!"

"I offered you the best revenge I could," was my retort. "What better could I do?"

"And is it so, that such is the best thing the world can give me?" he responded. "Then do I want nothing more from the world. I will abstain from it altogether. In future, this quiet spot shall be enough for me."

"What mean you?" I cried, struck with a horrible foreboding. "You intend — "

"I intend here to rest. Why should I go further into a world that brings to me merely scenes of misery and discomfort? Now I know that my race and city,—that the army and great Hannibal himself—are all gone, even as you first told me. Here, then, will I remain, content to ask no other place."

There was then silence for a few moments. He gazed moodily into the fire,—I sat pretending to look upon my book, but found the letters swimming before me, as I reviewed the terrible fact that this man was about to fasten himself upon my whole life like a hideous incubus. Suddenly he started, raised his head and drawing off from his finger a large richly chased gold ring, placed it upon the open page before me.

"Listen!" he cried. "She—" and he nodded significantly towards the other room, "has tried to teach me to believe in your gods. I believe in them

not,—my own are sufficient for me. But yet, there are certain customs of your faith which are not all bad. To-night, I am told, is the night when in memory of the birth of one of your gods, men are wont to make gifts to each other. It is a good custom. So, there! Take that ring, therefore, for your own. I got it with a Hispanian princess. I took the princess, also, but I gave her away to my friend. The ring only did I keep, and now it is yours."

"And what-" I said.

"What shall you give me in return?" he cried. "What else, indeed, should you give me other than herself?" And again he pointed significantly towards the door of the other room. "I cannot live altogether alone, and she pleases me. Long enough already have you had her; and I know that she will soon learn to love my youth and manhood the best."

"And do you think that I will consent to-"

"Dog!" he cried, ferociously starting up. "Dog of Roman descent, it may be! Dare you object? Do you think we of Carthage ravaged Hispania and crossed these mountains to be thwarted in whatever we desire? Are we not the conquerors? Oppose me, and I will crush your poor limbs together at a single blow!"

I listened to him with horror. My blood curdled within me. There was no doubt that, if it came to force, he could do as he threatened and crush me like an egg-shell. Nor could I protect my rights by appealing to his reason or to the laws. The latter were too far off from me, in my isolation,—the former was not susceptible of guidance, in his present

distorted state of mental vision. For I could see that he mingled the past with the present in such blinded shape as not to realize that the right as well as the might was not with him. He forgot, or rather could not comprehend, how many centuries had elapsed since the army had crossed the Alps in conquering array. Though all were now dust,—mere memories of a long-buried past,—to him there was remaining all the glory of a dominant race,—gilding his armor and making his recollections glow with pictures as of yesterday. In his sight I was no other than one of a subjected people, rightfully given up to pillage;—and to him would Ursula appertain as spoil wrested from a slavish race.

"Let us talk this over," I gasped forth at length, perceiving the necessity of temporizing with him. "You say well that this Christmas time is the period for exchanging gifts. But the exchange should be more equal than what you propose. Stay! we will talk the matter over at our leisure with a bottle of Falernian. You must before this have heard our Roman drink well-spoken of. And now, what more have you to offer for her?"

Gladly I saw that he was not disposed to be ungenerously exacting; and, for the sake of peace between us, would come to fair terms, even at some fancied sacrifice to himself. Therefore we seated ourselves at different sides of the table, and commenced what was with me a deceptive negotiation. Under pretense of the Falernian, I brought out a bottle of wine,—strong and insidious,—such as he

could never have drank of before; and filling up his glass, I bade him propose his terms. He drank, and I could see the liquid mount with irresistible effect, into his eyes. He would give for Ursula his bracelet,—nay, he no longer had that, having gambled it away during the Hispanian campaign,—but he would give his helmet and his shield,—if those were not enough, he knew where, before leaving Hispania, he had buried a cup full of coin, and he would take me to the spot,—he would give up for her, if necessary, his gods themselves. And so, profusely babbling forth his vain offers, at last his stupefied head sank slowly upon the table, and thence he gently slid upon the floor, and there at full length, slept.

Then,—restraining the momentary impulse to brain him as he lay, and thus, with one felonious blow, rid myself forever of the torment of his persecutions,—I merely threw a long cloth over him to hide him from my sight, and opening the door that led into our chamber, called out to Ursula.

"Arouse yourself, Ursula," I said. "Dress in all haste and let us depart from here. There is work before us and it must not be delayed."

"And whither-"

"Ask me not now. At some other time I will tell you. For the present, give little rein to your thoughts, and hasten."

In silence and in full trust that at the proper time I would reveal my meaning and so ease her wonderment, Ursula arose, and unhesitatingly prepared to obey me. A few moments, and all being ready, we departed. I led her quickly through the outer room,

—so quick that by the darkened light she could not see the form of the slumbering Carthagenian beneath the extended cloth. And so we hurried forth, and I turned the key in the lock, believing that I was leaving the cabin forever. What mattered it, after all, as long as thereby I might find some other nook of peace upon the further side of the mountain, to which the barbarian could not track us? Whatever of worldly goods I here lost, could I not elsewhere replace? Only let me now make timely flight before the foe had a chance to awaken.

So long had I been sitting up into the small hours of the night, before the Cathagenian had entered, and so protracted had been our subsequent negotiation, that it was now near three o'clock in the morning. The air was cool and crisp, yet not too cold. The snow was firm under foot, and altogether there was no bar to speedy progress. Within an hour or two silently threading the mountain passes, we succeeded in putting so great a distance between the barbarian and ourselves, that I feared not to tarry for a few moments' rest at a roadside hostelry. This rest we gradually prolonged until it was near morning before we set out again. Then once more we continued our route, gradually winding further up the mountain, while each moment with greater confidence I assured myself of safety. But as the stars paled out of the steel-gray sky and the dawn began to appear, I saw far down in the valley, and following upon our track, a single dark speck. I knew that it must be the Carthagenian, too soon awakened and become cognizant of our flight; and anon I perceived, by the wild exultant flourish of his shield, that he had detected our figures in bold relief against the white snow, and was animating himself to more vigorous pursuit. But I said nothing to Ursula about what I had seen, and merely pressed on, more rapidly, if possible, than before.

Soon as we ascended a slope of the mountain, I could see that our pursuer had already traversed half the remaining distance between us, and my heart grew sick with fear. The road we were traveling led to a village, gaining which, I might feel sure of protection; but this village was still many miles away, with no intervening cabins; and it was certain that before reaching safety, the evening would be upon us. There was only one hope of relief; and that consisted in the chance of losing ourselves from observation in some quiet by-path. This I now resolved upon attempting.

Between the rocks at my left hand was a narrow path which, leaving the main road, now passed from one mountain slope to the other, crossing, in its progress, the great Glacier. Down this we sped, until we stood upon the Glacier itself, half way to its source. Looking back, I could see that our pursuer had not been deceived by my divergence from the main road, but had himself turned aside, and was still vigorously following us. My heart stood almost paralyzed, for, now, alas! there was no further way of retreat. The only hope was to press on as before and trust to chance.

Differing from what it was below, the Glacier here was rough and broken, the surface at times

raised into unsightly hillocks of ice and snow, amidst which the path wound deviously, here and there, at only a few feet distance, hidden altogether from sight. Slowly we picked our way; and half across we found that there had opened a crack or crevasse in the surface of the ice, about seven or eight feet broad and of unfathomable depth. At the other side, the path abruptly terminated, and, owing to some alteration in the mountain surface, appeared to be altogether lost. Still I pressed on, however, anxious for the moment only to reach the other side of the crevasse. A loose log lay near, once doubtless embedded in the ice. This log I now placed across the gap,—cautiously we assisted each other over to the other side, -and there resting, there was nothing left for me to do but, as calmly as possible, to await the inevitable issue.

Looking around I noticed that the dawn had already brightened almost into full daylight, though as yet the sun had not risen. Here and there, however, some of the tallest peaks were already gilded with its rays, and swiftly the glorious sheen of light was descending along the mountain sides toward the valley below. In the East the sky was one sea of gold and purple clouds, showing that the sun itself was now close at hand, rapidly climbing into sight and at any moment might appear. Lighter and lighter at each succeeding instant now perceptibly grew the shaded valley. I could easily mark the distant village where for us there would have been safety. At one side and seemingly almost at our

feet stood the little hostelry where we had passed part of the night,—beyond, our own deserted home. The whole broad panorama was gorgeous with natural beauty. Even I, though so accustomed to it and withal so unappreciative, might have delighted in it, but for one terrible blemish. This was the dark spot which all the while, and as yet unperceived by Ursula, was following us as relentlessly as a sleuth hound along the path which we had just traversed;—now seemingly at rest, now disappearing entirely from sight behind one of the larger hummocks of ice,—then again issuing into view and always nearer than before!

Suddenly, Ursula, lifting her eyes to mine and taking me by the hand, broke her long imposed silence.

"Christmas morning at last," she said. "And now I know why you have brought me hither. It was kindly intended, though it has failed of its purpose, and therefore I thank you for it."

"And that purpose—"

"It was — you must not deny it — it was to do this time that which I have so often asked of you — to attend with me at the early mass in the convent-chapel. But unaccustomed to the path, you have missed the way. See! yonder stands the chapel, not so very far away, but that, in the gathering daylight we can mark nearly every window, every angle of the roof, can even count the five little bells that hang so motionless in the gable-turret. And look again! Some of the neighboring villagers are already climbing the ascent to give the mass their

presence. Too late for us, though, now, I think. We should have taken the right-hand path."

"Too late, indeed!" I said, with inward groan, as I watched the pursuer still nearer than before.

"But that matters little, after all. For truly, the Vespers may make amends, and there is no better place than this, with only the grand presence of God's nature around us, in which to tell you all that I have so long treasured up to say. I have so ardently waited for this Christmas morning; and now that it has come, I hardly know how or where to begin."

"Speak out freely from your first thought, dear Ursula," I answered; and my heart sank lower than ever, as I wondered whether she was about to confess to me, as a secret that could not longer be withheld, her passion for the Carthagenian.

"It is this, then," she said. "Months ago — but where exactly it began, I cannot tell — I felt that, for your great love for me, you were giving up all the promise of your future life. I saw it in your abstracted moods when you would seem to pierce through the mountain sides and gaze again, in imagination, upon your own distant home; — I knew it from your mutterings in your sleep. Then I perceived that your heart was not in these scenes about us, — that you would have loved to return to your own city, and would have done so, but for one thing."

"And that one thing, dear Ursula?" I responded, dreading to learn how nearly she might have probed to the bottom of my suspicious thoughts.

"Why, what indeed could that one thing be, except that by reason of your love for me, you would not take me from these scenes which you thought I could best enjoy, having been brought up among them! What, indeed, but that, for my sake, you resolved to school yourself to love these mountains and forget, as much as possible, your own much dearer home? But all the while, had I no love for you, that I should make no sacrifice in return? Therefore it was in my mind to tell you how cheerfully I will depart from here, and go with you whithersoever you would. And so I should have told you many months ago, but for the coming of this Carthagenian."

"Ah! The Carthagenian, indeed!"

"Then I delayed; for I saw that in the occupation of fathoming the mystery of his appearance and history, you needed no other pursuit to make you happy. And then, too, there came upon me the selfish desire to please myself as little in hurrying him, if possible, into the circle of our own dear Church. Therefore, to that intent, I toiled; finding at first a pleasure in it,—then a weariness which only my sense of duty could help me to support,—then—"

"But why a weariness, Ursula?" I could not resist exclaiming. "Would not the task be a pleasant one, always, with so fair a pupil?"

"Fair, do you say? Yes, now that you recall it, he was fair to some extent, though at the time I never thought about it. Strong and well formed, indeed, — yet for all that, it must be said, with little soul and intelligence in his face. Possibly, were I

like the maidens of this valley, not taught as I have been by union with yourself to put my affections upon those cultured graces that are higher than any mere attractions of the physical frame, I might have learned to admire that barbarian youth;—but not now—not now. None but yourself I think can ever now hold my admiration, much less my love."

Hearing this, I drew a long breath and could have even slain myself for the late cruel suspicions of my heart. To atone for all must be the business of my future life. And yet, what future life could be destined for me, with that hated pursuer every moment drawing closer?

"And so at last," she continued, "my probation came to an end as the Carthagenian left us, never again, I hope, to return. And when he departed, I would then have told you all, but that it was within a month of this blessed Christmas, and so I thought that I would wait. For thus I reasoned. I have come to you poor and desolate. This is the season for giving gifts; but what material gift have I that I can confer upon you? And then I said that it was in my power, after all, to give you what you might value far more than anything else, - your freedom from this life that now so heavily weighs you down, the resumption of those olden pursuits in which your heart must be so much interested. Take them, dear husband, upon this Christmas morning, and with whatever rich treasures of my love I can pour out in words, this gift of a newer and more suitable life for yourself. I shall never repine at leaving the mountains. Let us depart at once unto your own native city. There, as well as here, I shall bask in the sunshine of your love; and where your love is, there will always be my most happy feeling of home."

"Is it a dream?" I said, for the moment overpowered by emotion; forgetting even the present peril we were in, and thinking only to gaze enraptured upon her face, so radiant with the divine luster of love and truth, and to wonder that I had been so blinded hitherto as not to read aright this faithful heart. And how blinded had I been, indeed, not to have recognized the certainty that, in the end, even my trials would result in good! For even at that instant of supreme joy and forgetfulness of peril, I saw how truly the presence of the Carthagenian himself had served its friendly purpose. Apart from him, indeed, Ursula would none the less have made to me, upon this Christmas morning, that priceless gift of self-sacrifice and love. And yet, apart from the memory of him, how could I, in accepting the gift, so completely have crushed out forever all the foolish jealousies of my heart? Still, but for him, there might have come, in the newer sphere of action, something of the olden dread of other admirations stealing her love away from me. But now that this glorious statuesque beauty thus freshly arisen as from another world had failed to kindle in her heart one response or even recognition of its power to charm, how could I ever doubt again?

"Is it a dream?" I therefore repeated. "Or am I indeed awake, and is this a sweet reality? Come to my arms, dearest Ursula; and upon this blessed

Christmas morning, let me in turn confess to you—"

Yet ere I could speak further in acknowledgment of my fault, and tell the bitter story of my late distrust, I was recalled, as by a flash, to the perception of our present danger; for glancing up, I saw our dreaded pursuer now clambering over the rugged path not fifty feet away. Ursula, also, then saw him, and in helpless terror sank slowly from my arms.

"Yes—upon your knees now be it!" I cried, "and there pour forth such prayers for our deliverance as never yet you have learned to utter!"

And as I spoke, the enemy came still nearer, until he stood upon the further side of the chasm and faced me. I could see his features aglow with demoniac delight at having finally driven us to a stand. More than ever, too, did he now seem arrayed with glorious beauty of form, as light and athletic in shield and helmet, he there confronted me. Of that stately beauty, indeed, I could no longer hold one jealous feeling; but what hope of rescue could I have from that fierce determination towards wrong which glared so savagely in every feature? I saw Ursula bowed at my feet in prayer, her face turned with reverential instinct towards the convent chapel; but how could prayers or chapel aid us there? As for myself, with one vigorous motion of the foot, I hurled the log upon which we had crossed, deep down into the crevasse; but how could this obstruct one who, with overbearing leap across the chasm, could bear down my feeble frame before.him, as if it were a reed?

"Dog of a mountaineer!" he said. "Will you surrender her to me? Or must I come thither and wring your bare neck before seizing her for my own!"

"Barbarian whelp!" with violence, I retorted, mustering all of my remaining resolution in support of that last torrent of defiance. "If you think that she should be yours, then come across and take her."

He foamed at the mouth with rage at being thus addressed; and, for a moment, gazed around for some means of crossing the icy chasm. Finding none, he placed his shield and helmet upon the ice, retired a few paces, the better to make his leap, and then, like the wind bounded forward.

Just at that instant, the rising sun peeped above the mountain, and all the bells of the little chapel rang out their salutation to the new born Christmas. Was it merely some sudden current of air which carried the sound towards us? And was it a mere chance that all the bells now so loudly broke forth together? Or, on the other hand, has it been mysteriously so ordered for our protection? I cannot tell, indeed. I only know that though I had often heard the bells in their most lusty peal, I had never listened to them as now. Not one bell, merely - not even two or three; but the whole five bursting out with instant, hurried, tumultuous clash! Not coming to our hearing as from any distance; but in one loud, discordant clanging peal breaking in upon our senses, seemingly at our very ears with deafening resonance - almost overwhelming us with the sudden concussion of the metallic blast! Even in our instant of peril, it struck upon Ursula and myself as with vital, material force — bearing us back helpless with the torrent of sound! And it came upon our enemy like an avenging stroke at the very critical poise of his onward leap; so that confusedly his face turned wildly away, his limbs failed in their proper action, and in that supreme moment of his need, the full energy of his spring deserted him!

A moment more - and as I gathered my own disordered faculties together, I saw that my foe had fallen, with his whole body hanging within the crevasse, and supported only by his hands convulsively clinging to the edge. Vigorous as were his writhings, there was no hope of extrication. Each instant as there he hung, the partially softened ice began to break and splinter away beneath his fingers. by one they relaxed. For a second I looked upon his face, marked not only with agonized despair, but also with baffled hate as he gazed upon me; and above all, I could also note, by the strained backward rolling of his eyes, that the discordant pealing of the bells, in that last moment of vain struggling for his life, was still overmastering and affrighting Then his stiffened hands relaxed their enfeebled hold, and falling, he passed forever from my sight. There was nothing left to tell me that it had not been all a dream, except the shield and helmet lying motionless at the further side.

"Down! Down once more into your icy tomb!"
I cried, in an ecstasy of relief; while the bells,
changing from their first unearthly clamor now broke

into a softly modulated march of triumph. "Lie there, once more, for twenty centuries to come! It will not be I, who, at their end, will rescue you from your frozen sepulcher and once more warm your viper blood into ungrateful action!"



And now, once more and ever, all thanks to God, for that great and wondrous deliverance from peril upon this blessed day! And let the bells still ring their sympathetic peal of joy, for that upon this Christmas morn my heart has had its jealous clouds thus swept away and thereby gained that richest and most priceless gift of perfect peace and security!





